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Gentle Joseki, part IV by Pieter Mioch

The Patterns

Some of the aspects of the remaining moves in answer to the white approach knight's move, the keima kakari. The moves I haven't told you anything about yet are given in dia 1, A-E.

Various other ways to answer the keima kakari

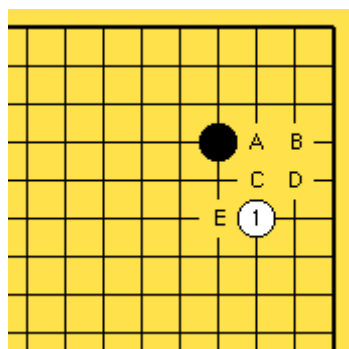
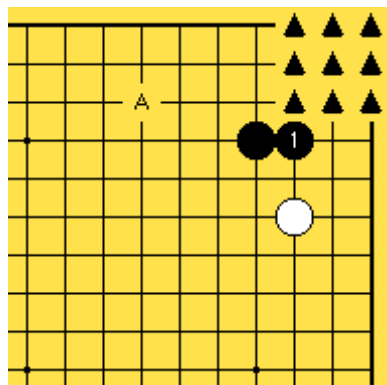


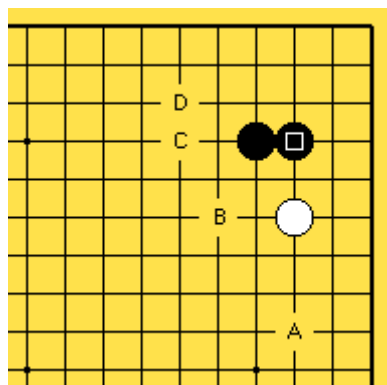
Diagram 1

I'm not a programmer myself but since I started trying to tell you something on an elementary level about joseki I can imagine what an extremely difficult task computer people undoubtedly are having figuring out a way to make up code covering all the necessary points, which seem to be virtually limitless. Every single edition of Gentle Joseki I desperately make a choice among the zillions of things, which are worthwhile telling you. When I finally put up the handful of diagrams here I feel often frustrated that I, again, wasn't able to show you more, my sincere apologizes for this. Looking through previous episodes of Gentle Joseki I realize that I did not spend nearly enough time, text and diagrams dealing with the already explained other possible black moves. I hope to get back to them in the future, someday. (Please don't go holding your breath.)

Black plays sagari



The move, which will not require too much explaining, is perhaps 1 in dia 2. On it's own it's maybe not a perfect move but you make about 9 points with two moves as shown by the triangles in the dia. If black has the time to add a move around A he will almost double that amount, this would be making optimal use of his stones, in other words, an ideal way of playing.

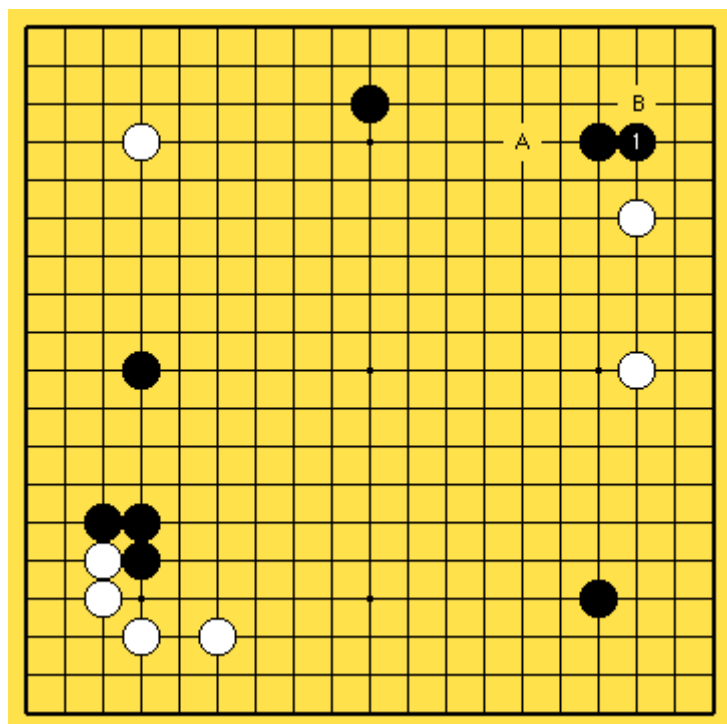


Now white can continue choosing among A-D in dia 2a. If white plays A or B and starts something at the right side black will, of course, solidify the upper side with a move around C. Neither the white move A nor B, however, is out trying to make the black sagari look like a bad move. If white insists on showing black that maybe his choice of moves (= sagari "0") was not correct he'll play at C or D after which there are, again, tens, hundreds of variations unfortunately not given this time, sigh.

Please do not forget that the black sagari (descending move) 1 in dia 2 is not so popular when there is no black stone already somewhere at the upper side.

Diagram 2 & 2a

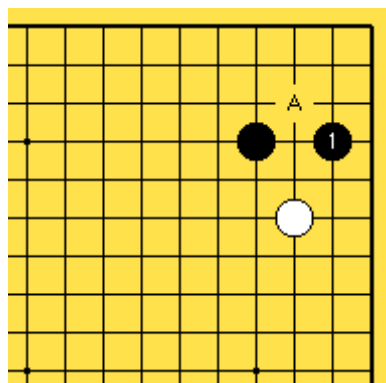
A splendid move



Look closely at dia 3, here you can see a position where black 1 makes a splendid move. Of course instead of 1 a move at A instead is very possible, too. However, A has the drawback of leaving white the chance of invading at B. Black 1 is the tightest move possible and clearly goes for territory.

Diagram 3

Various other ways to answer the keima kakari

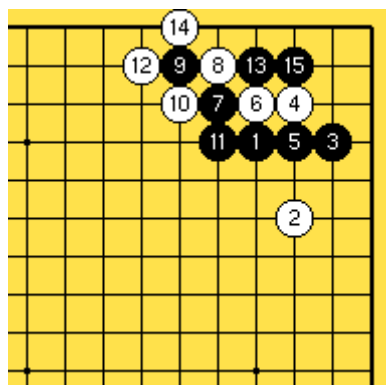


The move 1 in dia 4 seems much in the same spirit as the black sagari we just had a look at.

Black 1 in dia 4, however, is hardly a move worth recommending when played with no friendly stones in the direct vicinity, preferably a stone at the left at a keima's distance. There is a painfully obvious peep at A which white in the future can use as a first move in a sequence going for the corner. There's nothing much black can do about keeping white out the corner.

Diagram 4

White invades



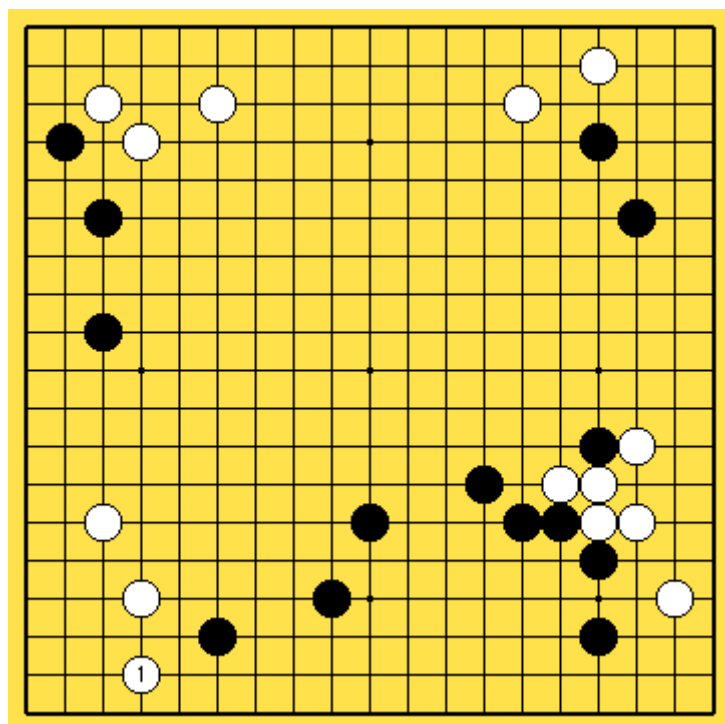
In dia 4a you can see what most likely will happen if white directly enters the corner after black 3. Black, to be sure, can save face with the skillful tesuji of black 9 but one cannot help feeling that black is taken in a little. Prove of this is the exchange white 2-black 3. Imagine the situation without this exchange and you have a basic joseki. So after the basic joseki you can say that white played at 2 and that black, instead of fiercely pinching, the move dictate by fighting spirit, docile answered at 3. Although black 3 is of course not completely wasted it is a bit of slack move.

Diagram 4a

As often, however, in the case you feel your opponent has played a lesser move, it is advisable to not immediately try to show or prove your opponents move was a bad one. In the situation of dia 4a, for example, it might very well be a good idea for white to stay out of the corner for a while and let black worry about coming back there and play a defensive move.

The sagari, black 1, of dias 2 and 3 is on its own maybe not the best move possible but in many situations I don't think it will come out bad. Black 1 in dia 4 is just the other way around, unfortunately, on its own it's hard to make it in a good move. Black 1 is a typical "finishing touch" move. only played with plenty of back up around.

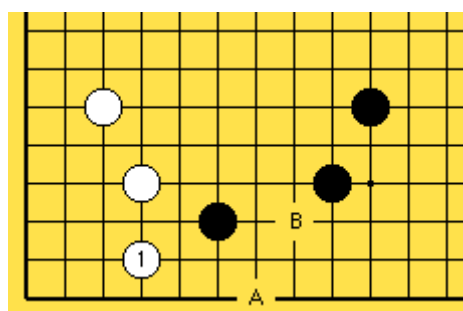
Ma Xiaochun versus Liu Xiaoguang, 11th Mingren title match, 1998



This is a fragment from a game between two top pros from China. Ma is White and Liu plays the black stones. In dia 5 white 1 is a nice tight move securing the corner territory while at the same time preparing huge endgame moves in regard to black's territory at the bottom

Diagram 5

Aiming an invasion



As you can see in dia 6 because of the position of white 1 he can next easily aim to invade at B, black cannot expect to capture or seriously attack this invasion. If white doesn't feel like invading (he could for example be afraid to lose the initiative (sente)) he might play the super slide of A, as you probably know called the "Large Monkey Jump", an excellent endgame move.

Diagram 6

Greedy?

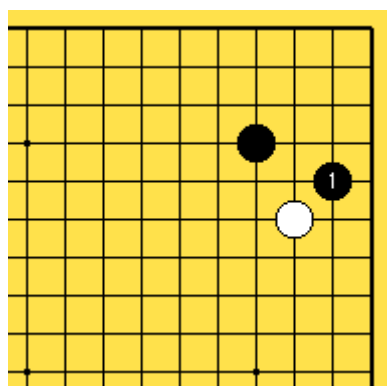


Diagram 7

As with the black sagari (1 in dia 2) and the ikken-tobi one-space-jump (1 in dia 4) black 1 in dia 7 tries to secure the corner, too. This was for a long time one of my favorite moves when I was still playing tournaments in Holland, ages and ages ago. Many of my opponents not really had any clue about how to deal with this move and not a small number of them tried the most crazy things to prove that black 1 is just too greedy to be a correct move. Well, it certainly does look greedy, I guess, but is a perfectly common move and it does secure a large chunk of the corner

Let's have a look at a peaceful continuation after black 1, for example this could happen (dia 8).

Joseki

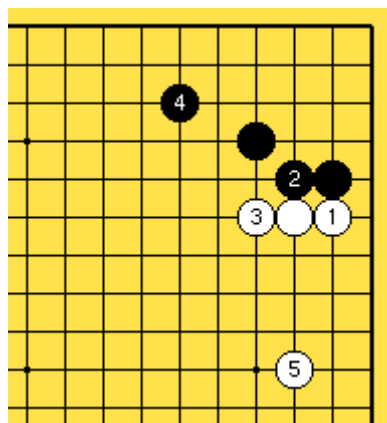


Diagram 8

Dia 8. This is a joseki, or, a sequence of moves, which gives both players a results they can live with. Black 1 in dia 7, however, has some unexpected features:

Move of a madman?

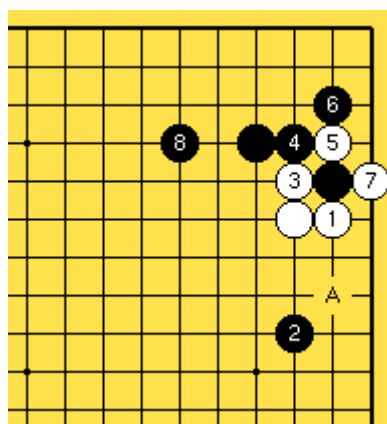
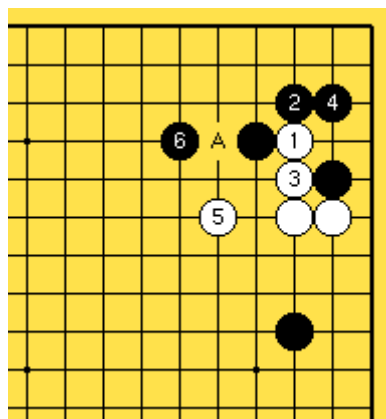


Diagram 9

Black 2 might look like the move of a madman but it's really quite fancy. White 3 is about the worst thing he can do. Without second thoughts black'll let go of one stone in order to create an impressive formation up to 8. White has not gotten much in return and if white isn't careful black will next play at A and white even won't even be able to make two eyes locally. This is a result very much to black's liking.

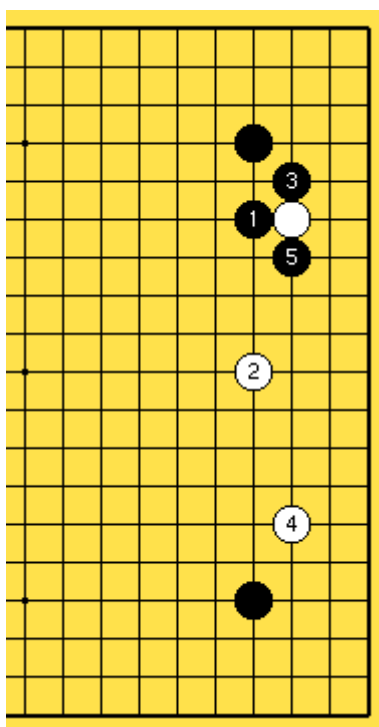
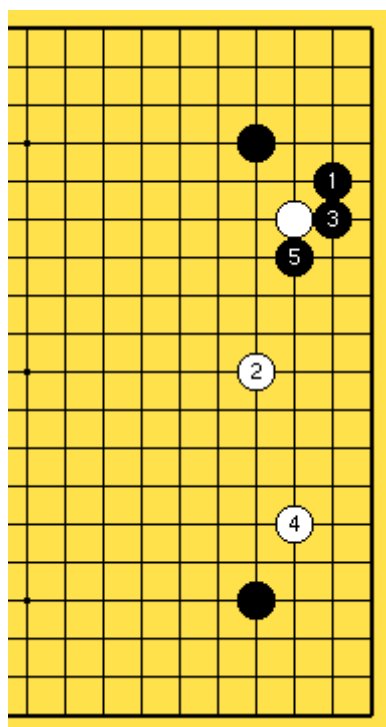
White's tesuji's



White's best move is at 1 in dia 10. This is a sharp tesuji, however, if white were to continue with 5 the result is again very nice for black. White should play a second tesuji, at A, instead of 5.

Diagram 10

Black is low

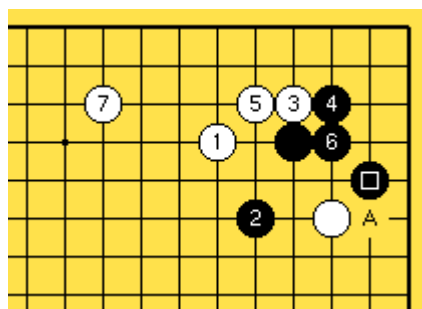


When playing white I don't like the blocking move (= 1 in dia 8) very much. Black 1 is in a rather low position, the best move black often has to continue is at 3, another low move. So nothing to be worried about. In general it is a good attitude and often a necessary way of playing to just ignore your opponent's move. This is especially easy if your opponent's move was in a rather low position. In dia 11 black 1 and 3 are not in an optimal position, compare dia 11a.

In dia 11a black's 1 and 3 are used in a more efficient way, creating a thick position, this result is superior to black's result in dia 11. Thinking about the difference between the dia's 11 and 11a you might want to try a playing elsewhere with white yourself.

Diagram 11 & 11a

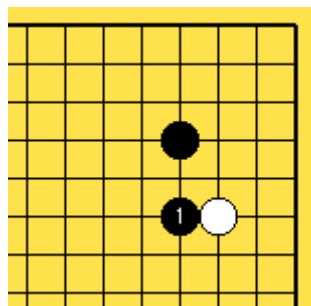
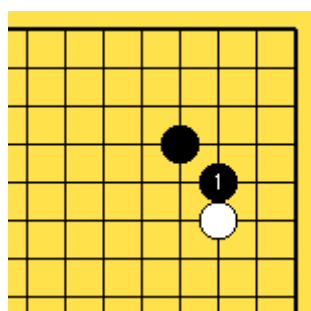
Ignoring black



So, just because black [] is a low position trying something else than just blocking at A is sometimes called for. In dia 12 white 1 is another move possible and 'kind of ignoring black []. White gets a nice shape at the upper side and black has some profit and thickness towards the lower right.

Diagram 12

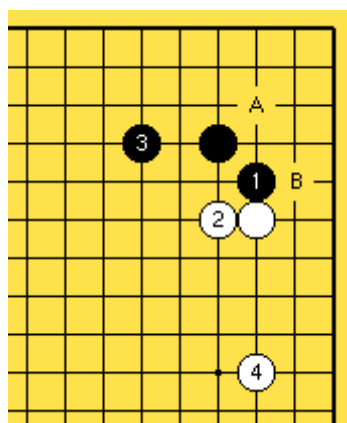
Whaaaaat?!



The kosumi-tsuke (diagonal clamp) is the last move I'm going to tell about this time. "Whaaaaat?!" I hear you say, "But you promised to go over **all** the remaining possible moves!" I hear you say again. Yes, yes, you're quite right, I can do nothing but admit it and make a new promise: in Gentle Joseki 5 I promise to **only** talk about the remaining move, the clamp of dia 14 this move is certainly worth a lot of attention.

Diagram 13 & 14

Unorthodox



Well, for now, back to dia 13. This move on its own is a rather unorthodox play for a good reason: it solidifies the white stone and does not protect the corner properly.

Dia 15 shows a sequence which is most definitely not a joseki, the result favors white. The only reason I can think of for black to play this way is that after white 4 black intends to immediately play at B. A black play at B guards against the white invasion at A and is a very, very, very big move. It is also, however, a bit slow. Usually black'll be too busy in the opening stage of the game elsewhere to be able to permit himself such a, mostly defensive, move.

Diagram 15

Superb move

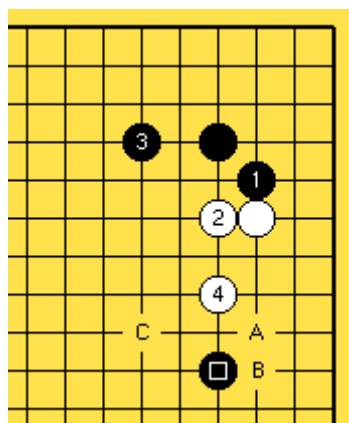


Diagram 16

Dia 16 shows a typical situation where black 1 is a superb move. Because of the presence of black [] white has only little room to make something resembling a group with eyes. To put it more bluntly: if white would play as in dia 16 next a black move at A, B or C is severe and white'll have to struggle for his life. This is, by the way, a joseki which you can try to initiate in a handicap game where black often has a stone at [] already. Do not expect, however, that white'll tamely play at 4 in a feebly attempt to create eyes. Any white player with a little talent will play elsewhere or pincer two spaces below [] instead of 4, in a handicap game, that is.

Preventing that white settles

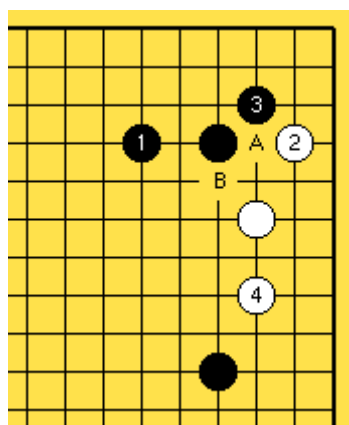


Diagram 17

So why exactly is black 1 in dia 16 such a good strategy you ask? Well, in dia 17 you can see what happens if black omits the kosumi-tsuke and plays the one-space-jump instead. White has way less trouble settling himself with, for example, the sequence up to 4 in the dia. Instead of white 2 he might also try the variation of clamping at A, next black 3 and white B. In an even game this way of playing is often too thin for white but in a handicap game where black often will start doing funny things in any situation smelling of a ko fight white might very well try it. So why on earth would I start telling you about the kosumi-tsuke of dia 13 when there's not even a pincer stone present of black?

Sonoda 8p (black) versus Shimamura 9p, 1977, black wins by 3.5

The reason is the obscure joseki shown in dia 18. Do not try to imitate this style of playing blindly, black's usually has a hard time of making his stones come out nicely once he plays at 1. In the dia, however, I think that the result shows that black 1 in combination with 3 is very playable. Note the cool reinforcing move of black 9, after this move white has no choice but to defend against the threat of black pushing through and cutting. White 10 is a stylish way of keeping his stones connected but all the same, it feels black nicely forced white into a joseki which white never thought even existed. There is also plenty of chance white will fumble somewhere along the line, but of course, we are not counting on that, aye?

To finish the joseki, by the way, black usually jumps out at A next. You might want to play like dia 18 if you feel that you ought to play a pincer instead of black 1 but are worried about the possible difficult variations which might follow. There is not much room for variation with the joseki in dia 18 and black gets to play a pincer and is happy.

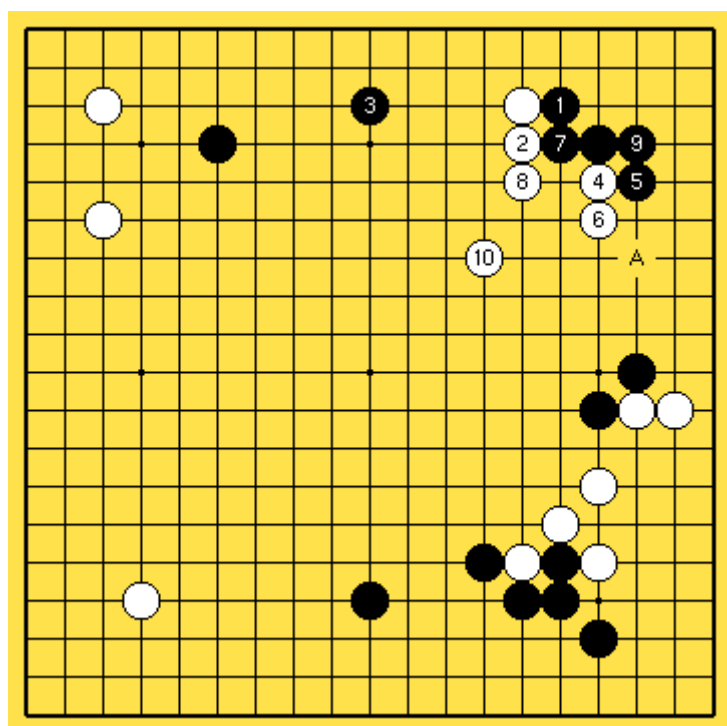
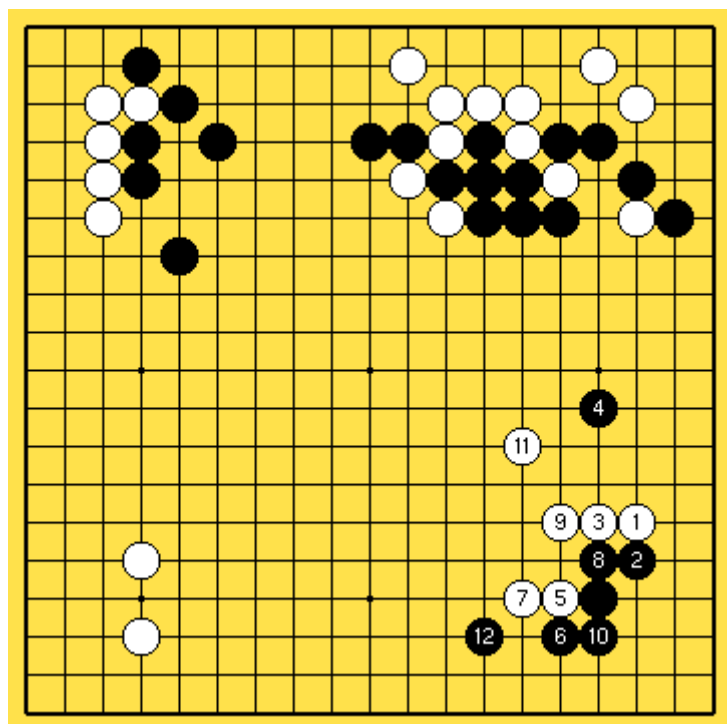


Diagram 18

Okubo Yukio 6p (black) versus Go Seigen 9p, 1956, white wins by 2



Go Seigen is white against promising young player Okubo in 1956. In spite of a 2 point reverse komi, black was not able to win against the most talked about player of the 20th century. Perhaps black 2 does not work well against he who virtually made up one new joseki per game during the first half of his career.

Diagram 19

Appendix 01

Index of joseki's mentioned in this episode:

